

A NEW NATION

"THIS day indeed is an important one, in the history of Ghana and of Africa, and in that of the Commonwealth."

"It is most appropriate that the new State that comes into existence today should be given a new name—Ghana, and it is also most fitting that this name should be taken from that of the ancient empire that flourished in the western and southern Sahara for many centuries. Today, the ancient name of Ghana is heard again after about a thousand years, and the descendants of those who flourished in the old West African empire take their place as citizens of a sovereign State which is a member of a Commonwealth such as the people of ancient Ghana could never have envisaged."

So reads part of a message of greeting to the people of Ghana recorded in the studios of the NZBS by the Hon. T. L. Macdonald, Minister of External Affairs. This message, together with other messages of greeting from all the members of the Commonwealth, will be broadcast by the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service on Wednesday, March 6, the day that the Gold Coast becomes Ghana, an independent self-governing State within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Earlier, the NZBS will mark the coming event with the broadcast of *The Gold Coast Becomes Ghana*, a BBC programme by Louis MacNeice, from YA stations and 4YZ at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday, March 3.

The date of the transition is March 6—on another March 6 113 years before, British jurisdiction in the Gold



★ ABOVE: Voting at a Gold Coast general election—a voter receives a ballot paper from a polling assistant at Kungungu polling station in the Northern Territories. RIGHT: Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. ★



Coast area was first defined in an agreement with the native chiefs. Six years later, in 1850, the first Legislative Council was set up for what was then the Colony, and since then Britain has guided the people of the Gold Coast slowly but surely towards self-government, at the same time helping them to build up a network of social services and a backing of sound economic development.

In 1946 the Legislative Council for the first time had a majority of Africans, for in the new Constitution of that year the official members of the council, once a majority, were made a permanent minority. The year was also significant for the introduction of Par-

liamentary government to the territory of Ashanti, which previously had been ruled by direct Ordinance of the Governor.

Since then advance has been rapid. The 1951 legislature represented all the people of the Gold Coast (the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories) and the Constitution introduced in 1954 brought the country to the threshold of full self-government. This 1954 Constitution provided for an all-African Cabinet presided over by a Prime Minister, and a legislative assembly whose 104 members were elected by secret ballot under universal adult suffrage.

Prime Minister of the Gold Coast since that office was created in 1952, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah will also be the first Prime Minister of the new State of Ghana. He was born in a small village in the Gold Coast and educated at mission schools and at Achimota College, then in universities in America and England. When he returned to the Gold Coast in 1947 he gave up law for politics and organised the Convention People's Party which won the general election of 1951, that of 1954, and the election held last year.



DR. FRANCIS WEST

Writing Pacific History

NEW techniques are needed for the proper study of Pacific history, contends Dr. Francis West, Senior Lecturer in History at Victoria University College, whose two talks on *The Writing and Re-writing of Pacific History* will be heard soon from YC stations.

In the Pacific Islands the historian is faced with a multicultural situation that has in the past been interpreted only in the terms of the historian's own culture.

"How can the historian go behind the defective written records to the reality of the situation? The short answer is that he can only do so in so far as he breaks out of the traditional methods of history. . . . The historian must, in fact, become something of an anthropologist if he is to go behind the documents to the other culture involved in his field of study." The first talk on *Writing and Re-writing Pacific History* will be heard from 1YC, 9.30 p.m., Friday, March 1.

N.Z. LISTENER, FEBRUARY 22, 1957.

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